



Buzzwords ...



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..... the newsletter for National Beekeepers' Association members

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PRESIDENT'S NOTES

May Heather and I take this opportunity to wish you and your families the compliments of the season, good health and happiness for this New Year 1991.

Most New Zealand beekeepers are facing a very "mixed bag" as far as their honey crops are concerned. The results to date indicate that the North Island may have an average crop but the honey has mainly been produced from bush sources. In the South Island if an average crop is produced it will be from a late flow.

As your national president I find two items of real concern for our industry and I hope we are able to solve these to everyone's satisfaction.

The first murmuring is of feeding drugs. New Zealand's record to date has been free of this treatment. I hope those

people affected by BL in the pollination areas will give serious thought to the large majority of honey producers. The "clean green" image is growing momentum and New Zealand's drug free record must improve export sales of our product.

Our second problem is the effect that will occur with the proposed change of the hive levy collection. Your Executive is very well aware of the financial stress that some producers are under. It is essential to have a well organised national body. We appreciate the letters of concern we are receiving on different matters and they assist us to weigh up the situation.

Some of the serious outbreaks of disease experienced in recent times shows MAF has an important role to play. Our government must realise if they are to benefit from export sales they too must take some financial responsibility.

You have a good team serving your industry. Make 1991 a success story by giving your support.

Dudley Ward
NBA President

HIVE LEVY INCREASE

Commercial members will have received their hive levy demands by now. Based on the budget accepted by the National Executive in September, it was apparent that an increase in the Hive Levy would be necessary. An application was made to the Minister of Agriculture to increase the hive levy from 48 cents to 55 cents per hive.

In a future issue I hope to describe the process of setting the hive levy and how National Executive sets about collecting. Remember that if you think you will not be able to pay by the due date you may be allowed an extension by the National Executive but you will ultimately be required to pay the levy.

BRANCH NEWS

The **Auckland** branch of the NBA will hold its next business meeting on February 28 at 7:30 PM at the St Hilda's Church Hall, 12 Young Road, Penrose. After general business AAO Derek Bettsworth will show slides and talk on his Papua New Guinea experience.

Down in **Marlborough** they're having another successful wasp eradication day: Sunday 17 February at Whites Bay. This is a good chance to help the public, give the branch a good name, and collect some tall tales for the next St Bartholomew's day mead session.

NEW EDITOR

As the new editor of *Buzzwords* after Andrew Matheson's departure, I will admit to considerable trepidation. Though I have been involved in the production of all issues of *Buzzwords*, that is considerably different from actually writing all of these items. Andrew was a stern taskmaster, a careful proof reader and a stickler for accuracy and details. I would be happy if I could come even close to his quality of writing. You will very likely note a different style, fairly informal and chatty. I do hope to keep the content informative and interesting.

In a later issue, I hope you describe to you the actual production of an issue of *Buzzwords*, including such things as timing and work involved. Remember that *Buzzwords* is your newsletter - it was begun to provide a more timely vehicle for communication and dissemination of information than the *NZ Beekeeper*. The two publications really serve quite different purposes, and your National Executive feels that both are valid and necessary.

In the meantime, I appeal to you for your contributions. You can send them to me at 55 Watling Street, Tauranga, telephone (075) 781 422 (in the evening) or fax to (075) 442 386 anytime.

RESEARCH TOPICS

Several issues back the Apicultural Research Advisory Committee asked for some suggested areas of beekeeping research. The idea is that a sort of running 'wish list' be maintained that can be made available to potential researchers. University students needing projects and others might be more willing to carry out research in beekeeping areas if such a list were available.

Remember that the topics don't have to be just about bees or beekeeping - they could relate to bee products or marketing as well. Be creative and send in your own list of questions that have bothered you over the years or the ones you wish you could get answered to help you with your new honey and Marmite spread! See? There are two just there: what's the best way to mix honey and Marmite, and why is it that the combination sounds so utterly awful?

COST SAVING IDEAS

Along the same lines, remember that your National Executive is wanting to collect and disseminate ideas for cost savings. These might be along the lines of handy gadgets, management techniques or sources of cheap materials. It needn't be exotic or complicated. Your Executive is responding to the wishes expressed at the last conference that it assist beekeepers in reducing the cost of production. If you are one of those out there with a good idea that could help the rest, please help by contributing your ideas or schemes. Send them to PO Box 4048, Wellington.

SAVAGE (ISLAND) BEES

Did any of you catch this (rather useless) movie when shown on TV over the holiday period? I tuned in because when it was filmed about 8 years ago I was working as a builder in Rotorua. The crew I worked with had two contracts - one for the King's Palace (which was on Lake Tarawera) and the other for the Death Machine. The waste of money and resources associated with filming such movie is astounding.

One scene did suddenly interest me, however. South Pacific missionaries were shown togged up in bee gear working several hives of rather black looking bees (was this one of the sequences filmed in Northland?). A frame of brood was lifted from the brood box and inspected, all very well filmed.

Now, I've seen this movie about three times and it never struck me before. That was a nice frame of brood in a Langstroth hive (invented in the 1850's) being lifted out of a hive in the very early 1800's! Errors such as this must make movie continuity people lose sleep - or more likely it is knowingly included for its artistic merit, and reality takes a back seat.

POLLEN IN HONEY

Airborne Honey Ltd is undertaking some research work on the total pollen content found in many New Zealand honey

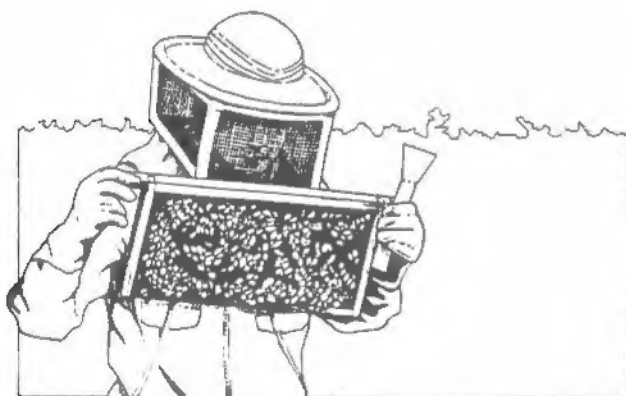
types. Airborne has asked and been granted assistance for this exercise from the industry trust funds. This work will build on the work done by Dr Neville Moar, which was published in the New Zealand Journal of Agriculture in 1985 under the title of "Pollen Analysis of New Zealand Honey". This much referred to work was the foundation for our current knowledge of New Zealand honey types.

There are definite problems associated with commercial samples of honey such as contamination of samples by other sources of pollen e.g. brood combs during the extraction process. Also some honey types have never been documented e.g. Calluna, nodding thistle, Spanish heath, etc. When it comes to marketing these honey types we have no base information to fall back on when stating that samples are of good or bad quality.

Airborne is requesting help from producers in supplying honey samples for analysis. If you have an interest in helping in this area (or have a commercially viable honey type that you feel needs documentation) contact Airborne Honey Ltd for details on what is required. Phone (03) 243 59, fax (03) 243 236.

FAX LIST

Time to update those out of date fax lists for all your beekeeping contacts! Send me a fax to (075) 442 386 before 20 February to have your name and fax included. The list will be printed in the March issue of *Buzzwords*.



YOUNG BEEKEEPER OF THE YEAR

The Bay of Plenty branch has prepared a comprehensive plan for how a national young beekeeper of the year competition might be handled. The National Executive has considered it and feels there is merit in such a programme. Copies of the proposal have been forwarded to branches. The Bay of Plenty branch will be asked to make a presentation at conference. We expect that other branches may well want to ask questions or make suggestions about the process, and this would give a good opportunity for everyone to be happy about how it would be handled. Make sure that your branch discusses the ideas in the paper so your delegates will come fully prepared to put your views forward.

MISS BUMBY RETURNS!

A nicely framed photograph of a painting of Miss Mary Bumby has been sent to the Northland branch for presentation to the Mangungu Mission house. Miss Bumby brought the first bees into New Zealand. This commemoration of the 150th anniversary of her arrival, though a bit late, has been welcomed by the mission house. The mission house has been extensively restored after being moved back to its original site in 1974. (It spent the period from 1856 to 1972 in Onehunga.) Northland branch will be arranging some publicity for the presentation. If you're travelling through Northland, make a particular point of going to see the mission house and our Miss Bumby, New Zealand's first beekeeper.

FEEDING DRUGS TO HONEY BEES TO CONTROL DISEASES

The National Executive and the industry Trustees commissioned a report from MAF Quality Management to research the literature to present a summary of research and beekeeping experience in the use of drugs to control American foulbrood disease.

The paper also covers the implications, problems and cost benefits of using drugs or chemicals to control both endemic diseases or exotic diseases. Though no recommendations are made, the issues to think through when considering whether/when/how to feed drugs to control bee diseases are all clearly presented. Some of the areas covered are: AFB history, levels, disease resistant strains of bees, increase of AFB with antibiotic use, antibiotic resistant strains of AFB, antibiotic contamination of honey, benefits and accessibility of antibiotics, costs, legal implications, European brood disease and drug feeding and the NBA survey of emergency response procedures.

This paper came in part as a response to conference remits and should be of interest to all beekeepers. The NBA librarian has been asked to prepare a summary with comment for the NZ Beekeeper, but you can also get your own copy from the NBA. Cost is \$5 plus GST (cash with order, please). It could form the basis of an excellent and informative meeting for your branch.

BUG IMPORTS

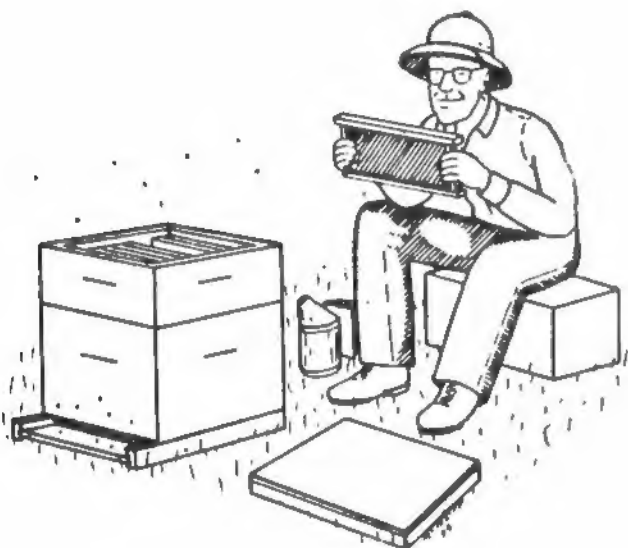
You'd be amazed at the number and size of the proposals that are made for the importation of various little beasties into New Zealand. After the NBA's very loud but ultimately losing work a few years back to protect gorse from a mite introduction, we are at least now fully consulted with each new proposal. This takes the form of a paper giving the history and possible merits for each new bug that various people want to bring into New Zealand.

Many of them would quite clearly have no impact on beekeeping, even remotely, but vigilance must be eternal. Before Christmas we received one for *Chilocorus kuwanae*. In this case, it was just as well we did, as the proposed introduction (it's a sort of ladybird) was intended to combat

a variety of armoured scale insect pests of kiwifruit. But the paper gave no real assurance that the creature would not then move into our forest areas. And that's where our own scale insect lives - the one responsible for honeydew production!

Backed with other objections from some organisations and individuals (such as Forest and Bird and MAFQual Plant Protection Centre - read Dr Stephen Ogden) the NBA was pleased to hear several weeks ago that the DSIR has asked that the project be delayed. Though they haven't given up, they acknowledged that they needed to collect further information and 'resolve an unanswered question'. One thing they will have to correct is a description of the bug as '3-4 cm long' - I think even I might be afraid of a ladybird that size.

And talk about strange bedfellows! Several of the objections came from Regional Councils who were concerned that the ladybird might decide to feed on the gorse spider mites!



PESTICIDES WORKING GROUP

The final draft of the agrichemicals code of practice has been completed and will be circulated to the participants in the Joint Primary Industry working party for discussion and their final comments. Part of that discussion will centre around whether the promotion of the code should be a low profile distribution through the participant organisations or a high profile educational programme.

Straight Furrow

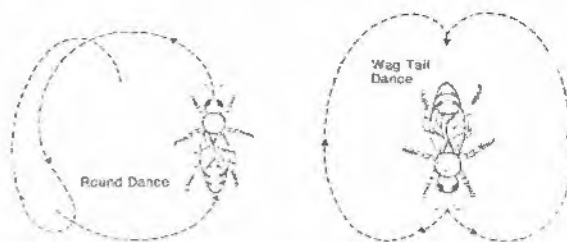
ROYAL JELLY

Demand for royal jelly is on the increase, and local beekeepers should be trying to capitalise on this. That's what MAF Invermay scientist Ron van Toor has suggested in a report on the commercial production and marketing of royal jelly in New Zealand.

According to the food marketing research unit at Otago University, New Zealanders consume over \$1 million worth

of royal jelly products a year, and almost all of this is imported.

There is enormous potential for New Zealand beekeepers to supply this market and create a small, viable royal jelly industry, but Mr van Toor said it has to be done correctly.



"Production needs to be market-related, there has to be a constant and reliable supply at a competitive price, and a methodical attention to good beekeeping practices," Mr van Toor has prepared a package which details how to meet these ideals.

His extensive research into royal jelly production carried out at MAF Invermay, Tara Hills and Manurewa has produced background into hive design and equipment, and the package also includes plans for a specially designed vacuum pump.

Mr Van Toor also offers information on site selection, diseases, packaging and most importantly, step-by-step management procedures.

He has worked out how a beekeeper can maintain and service 30 hives for royal jelly production, giving the amount of time needed to service a hive and produce 10 grams of jelly every three days. Marketing is an important aspect in production, and the package includes some advice on marketing options and business structures.

Mr van Toor's royal jelly production trials showed protein supplements could increase yield, and he has come up with "protein patties" to supplement the bees' diet to produce more royal jelly.

Beekeepers interested in finding out more should contact MAF Invermay.

MAF Invermay journalist Claire Grant

BUZZWORDS IS ...

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The views expressed in *Buzzwords* are not necessarily those of the National Beekeepers' Association nor of the Editor.